

# Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet

“ A Society dedicated to the education and preservation of the Psalmodikon and Sifferskrift Music. ”



Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet | Tel: +1 952-934-4535 | E-mail: enstrengb@gmail.com | Web: www.psalmodikon.com

## Notes from MUSIC-ON-A-STRING

Beatrice Hole

Greetings of the Season. The holidays are just around the corner.!

Life with the psalmodikon is so interesting, educational and worth my time. I wish space would allow me to share all the letters, etc. that I receive telling of the experiences of other psalmodikon players and enthusiasts. How interesting it is to hear from the Museums that are so willing to add the psalmodikon history to their reference files.

Along with membership dues, some readers send along extra “penga” for the expense of creating the Psalmodikon Newsletters, which is gratefully accepted. One fellow was so happy that he was able to sell his psalmodikon that he donated a portion of the proceeds to the membership fund. Another writes that he wanted to become a member to support the psalmodikon because he had learned of the instrument through a DVD about the Jenny Lind Chapel, also from the Nordic-American website, [Soundcloud.com](http://Soundcloud.com), and the movie “The Emigrants”. — And this is only a sampling of the mail I have received since the last Newsletter!

I trust that you will enjoy reading the little articles as much as I had searching for them.

May you always have a song in your heart and music at your fingertips!



## VISITORS TO LANDMARK CENTER

Beatrice Hole

Molly Beiningen and her husband, Kirk, of Milwaukie, Oregon attended a family reunion in western Minnesota recently and also visited the Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, Iowa. On their way to the Minneapolis Airport, they decided to stop at the [Landmark Center](#) in St. Paul. They enjoyed visiting the Psalmodikon and other instruments on display at the Schubert Museum and other interesting exhibits there.

Molly and Kirk are active members of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet. Kirk is a nephew of Carl Narvestad, of Granite Falls, who was instrumental in establishing the Hardanger Fiddle Association of America!

In August, the Sons of Norway delegates, to the International Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota enjoyed hearing one of their members, Ruth Gibson, play the psalmodikon on display at the Schubert Club Museum during their tour of St. Paul.

I have to add a side note. Ruth is also a long-time member of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet. I first met Ruth when I was trying to find a way to send one of our “American” psalmodikons as a donation to the Emigrant Museum in Ottestad, Norway. During one of my visits to Norway, I met Knut Djupedal, the Museum Curator. At

that time, he was seeking items for the Museum exhibit, that were used by the Norwegian immigrants after they arrived in the United States. The psalmodikon was certainly one of the items that fit their needs.

Out of the blue, popped Ruth Gibson. She said, “I will soon be taking a trip to Norway and I will “hand carry” the psalmodikon to the Museum.” And she did just that and has been a special friend to me ever since!



**Pictured:** (Below, left) Lydia Droegemueller, who now lives in Chile, visited the Nordic Strings and Bows exhibit at the Schubert Club Museum on vacation in Minnesota. Pictured is Lydia playing one of the psalmodikons on display at the Landmark Center in St. Paul. The information sheet on table is Lydia playing the psalmodikon at the age 10 with Beatrice. (Above) Molly Beiningen; (Below, right) Ruth Gibson.



## MUSIC MUSEUM IN ARIZONA

Dick Lundgren of Edina, Minnesota, and several others have brought to my attention that there is a wonderful museum of musical instruments located in Phoenix, Arizona at 4725 E. Mayo Blvd. (☞ [Maps](#)) The Musical Instrument Museum (MIM), which opened in 2010, is the world's only global musical instrument museum and is the largest of its type in

the world. The museum has 15,000 musical instruments from 200 countries and territories, and three of them are psalmodikons!

Perhaps some of you may be traveling to the Phoenix area in the near future and can make plans to visit the Museum or another way to see their inventory is on the internet at: ☞ <https://www.mim.org/>

## Swedish Website

Beatrice Hole

Received an e-mail from Gunnar Fredelius of Sweden informing me that he has created a web site about the psalmodikon. Part of it is in English, but the idea is to eventually have everything in both English and Swedish. It is a very interesting web site and would like to share it with our readers.

☞ The address is:

<http://nyckelharpanforum.net/psalmodikon/>

The link to "Psalmodikon Polska from Rattvik" is a manner of psalmodikon playing I have yet to try!

## Need Another Cup?



Here is one of those "must have" items. I purchased mine through [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). The cups must have been designed just for us psalmodikon players!

## Letter About Old Norwegian Psalmodikon

Beatrice Hole

*The following is a letter I received about a very, very old Norwegian psalmodikon. -BH*

Psalmodikon

During the 1970's following my grandfather's death, I was going through several of his former properties, looking for any Norwegian articles that might be salvageable. He had made a habit of going to farm sales looking for items that might otherwise be discarded. While I was going through the abandoned family cheese factory, the now destroyed Brenum factory near Wiota, Wisconsin, I found a rectangular box that was very dirty. I took it home and cleaned it up and started trying to find out what it was. With the help of Vesterheim, I learned that I had the basic box of a psalmodikon, missing all other parts. Since the back was almost unglued, I was able to remove the back safely to clean the inside. Amazingly, the builder's information was still on the inside; it was manufactured by "C. Warmuth Musik Instrument og Piano" (can't read last word or the next line), Christiana. The music scale on the face of it is badly faded, but mostly readable. With way too many moves since the 1970s, I cannot find my original research file on it. I sanded down a cello peg to fit the tuning peg hole and added a steel guitar string mainly to show what an intact one would look like. It has never been played since I found it as the makeshift peg and the residual dirt in the hole

means that it cannot be accurately tuned as the peg slips.

I can supply only a partial provenance, from the time I found it. I have had it since the 1970s. I assume my grandfather found it in a farm sale (auction of personal and farm belongings of a recently deceased person). This would have been in southwestern Wisconsin, in the large (by Wisconsin standards) early Norwegian settlement centered around eastern Lafayette county. My ancestors settled there as early as the 1840s. I am guessing that it was brought from Norway by one of the early pastors in the county. I think I remember that the C. Warmuth company was bought out about the 1880s, with the company going through several more mergers, but the successor company was probably still in business in Oslo about 1980. I cannot guess which of the several Norwegian Lutheran churches in or near Lafayette county it might have been used in. Probably one of the older ones, possibly Wiota (east) or Yellowstone.

My purpose for this letter is twofold. First, to let your organization know that another historic psalmodikon is still in existence. And second, to ask for suggestions about what to do with it as I am 79 and my wife is 80, so we need to slim down our possessions. I need to survey interest in our extended family yet. I know back in the 1980s the Vesterheim staff member said they had several and probably would not accept one that was not intact.

— J. Monson, Castle Pines, Colorado

## Memories of My Old Accordion

Beatrice Hole

My husband and I usually attend the meetings every Tuesday at the Norwegian Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. They have wonderful programs each week and I especially enjoyed the one recently when the pastor presented a "sing along" while he played his accordion.

It was great to sing all those old favorite hymns and hear them being played on the accordion. Sel-

dom to this day do we hear of an accordion being played in church.

While I was enjoying the music, it brought back a memory for me of a time in the 1950s when my Dad had taught me to play his old accordion. (He used to play for barn dances until I was born). Anyway, back in those days, our little country church always had a service on Sunday evenings, called the Luther League, sponsored by the young folks of the church. Each of us took turns participating in the program. Word got out that I was now playing the accordion

and was asked if I would play a couple hymns for the next Luther League program. That was special! I practiced and practiced playing nice and smooth. If I remember correctly back to the days when I was a teenager, the songs I chose to play were "Sweet Hour of Prayer" and "Children of the Heavenly Father". All went well, and I was so pleased until later, when I heard that the Elders of this old Norwegian Church had decided that the accordion was not to be played in the church again because soon I would be "jazzin" up all the hymns. —Uff Da



## ITEMS FOR SALE

### PSALMODIKON SONGBOOK (revised edition)

Written in *Sifferskrift* and 4-part harmony for psalmodikons. Includes 95 easy-to-play tunes of hymns, folk songs, and Christmas favorites.

\$15.00 ea. + shipping

Send orders to: Beatrice Hole

### CD of the PSALMODIKON QUARTET

\$15.00 pp

Featuring favorite hymns and folk tunes played on the psalmodikons of the Nordic-American Psalmodikon Quartet.

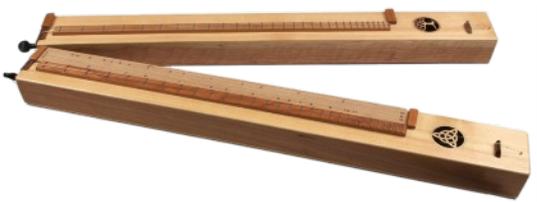
Send orders to: Singsaas Lutheran Church

Attn: Music CDs

P. O. Box 87, Hendricks, MN 56136

<http://www.countrychurchmusic.com/>

## PSALMODIKON KITS FOR SALE



Pre-cut Psalmodikon kits and accessories available at Musicmakers in Stillwater, Minnesota.

⌘ <https://www.harokit.com/psalmodikon.html>

Kit instructions, assembly videos and “How to Play the Psalmodikon” can be found at this website also.

## THE KLOKKER

*A past cultural and religious Institution in the Church of Norway for centuries. (An excerpt of an article by Pastor Sørensen of Trondheim)*

I always had a *klokke* when I was a pastor in Norway, except for my last four years when I was a pastor in the high Arctic. There I was everything; - janitor, custodian, door greeter, usher and alter guild, and of course, sometimes in between, the pastor....

And in my younger days, before I was ordained, I very often substituted as a *klokke* also.

In Norway, in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and also in the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the *klokke* played a main and very important role in the Church’s everyday life. He was both the pastor’s right and left hand, a helper and an assistant of great value. He was also the stabilizer. Pastors came and went, but the *klokke* was always there. He knew the people, the names, their families, he knew who was sick, who needed help, and to whom he pastor should pay a visit to for some reason or the other.... Very often he was also the school teacher, some times the only one. Therefore he also possessed a much greater respect and authority in the parish and the community around than the pastor. He was the local “University” and the “professor” in one. He was always present

## Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet & Newsletter

President

Beatrice Hole

Eden Prairie, Minnesota

+1 952-934-4535

[enstrengb@gmail.com](mailto:enstrengb@gmail.com)

Vice-President

Floyd Foslien

Hudson, Wisconsin

[ffoslien@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ffoslien@sbcglobal.net)

Treasurer

Joan Saathoff

Hudson, Wisconsin

[har.jo.saathoff@att.net](mailto:har.jo.saathoff@att.net)

Editor

Kristen Åkre

Mount Vernon, Washington

+1 253-341-8430

[kdakre@comcast.net](mailto:kdakre@comcast.net)

The Newsletter is published using PagePlus X9 ([www.serif.com](http://www.serif.com)) and is printed in Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

The Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet Newsletter is published in the Spring, Summer, and Autumn. We are always looking for newsworthy items and photos that you want to share with other readers.

The **\$8.00 membership fee** helps to cover the cost of printing and postage for the Newsletter and annual fee for the Psalmodikon Web Site.

Check the date on your mailing label which indicates if your dues are current.

Send membership dues to: Beatrice Hole  
6560 Leesborough Ave  
Eden Prairie, MN 55346

when the life of the people was concerned, at baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals, and very often he was the Master of Ceremonies. He was employed by the Church and very often he had his own parsonage, *klokkergarden*.

When the congregation came to Church on Sunday (which they really did, all of them, a century or so ago...) the *klokke* and *kirketjener* (a combination of an usher and an alter guild) had prepared and made the Sanctuary ready for Sunday service, the *Høyemesse*. The alter table was laid, the candles had been lit for half an hour, and when the bells tolled the third time, 5 minutes to 11 am (!) and the organist finished the prelude, the *klokke* came forward and prayed the *klokkerbønn*. He led the congregation singing the hymns — and he knew them all by heart. And so did many of the parishioners, too, because they had learned them from the *klokke*, who, as I said, was their teacher at school. He told them when to stand and when to sit again. And he led the congregation in the closing prayer. In the real old days, he assisted the pastor at the Churchyard, where they used to read all the official notices. Not only church announcements, but all the community ones. Remember there were not many newspapers, radios or TVs at that time. The *klokke*, beside the pastor and the local authorities, brought the news and the announcements, as one of the very few that could read at that early period of our history.

But that wasn’t all. He was a busy man, as busy as the pastor.... In Norway for many, many years, the pastor was responsible for the church records, which were also the Community records. Every birth, baptism, confirmation, wedding and funeral was in the Church records, and for years only there. And in days of no safe archives for records, it was the *klokke*’s duty to hand copy each and every

cont’d – *Klokke*, P. 4



church record book through the centuries.

As you understand, the *klokker* was very useful to the pastors coming and going, a resource of information, and the person people had to rely upon in so many relationships in their life. Without the *klokker*, the church wouldn't come so close to people's everyday life. He really has been, and will be forever, remembered as the cultural and religious "institution" in person he was.

Some times he is more often pictured in our literature as the pastor; an outstanding and excellent representative of the many servants in our Norwegian church history. You don't "see" him today, as before, but they are still around. The position of *klokker* is still on the pay roll, but today better known as Church secretary, the church office manager, the *klokker* deacon, and what have you.

This is written in loving memory of the many *klokkers* I have worked with, and also the last one on 12 January 1997. 

## Miscellany

Members of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet got together on Saturday, August 11, 2018 at the Zion Lutheran Church in Hudson, Wisconsin. We give thanks to our hosts Ruth Gibson and Joan Saathoff for making the arrangements.

Six psalmodikon players were present and everyone enjoyed playing many songs in the Psalmodikon Songbook. They also practiced several hymns to play for the Sunday morning worship service at Mt. Zion.



### NORDIC-AMERICAN PSALMODIKONFORBUNDET



MUSIC-ON-A-STRING

Beatrice Hole

6560 Leesborough Ave.

Eden Prairie, MN 55346-2823

Psalmodikon website: <http://www.psalmodikon.com/>